

TOC H JOURNAL

Vol. XXVIII

JULY, 1950

No. 8

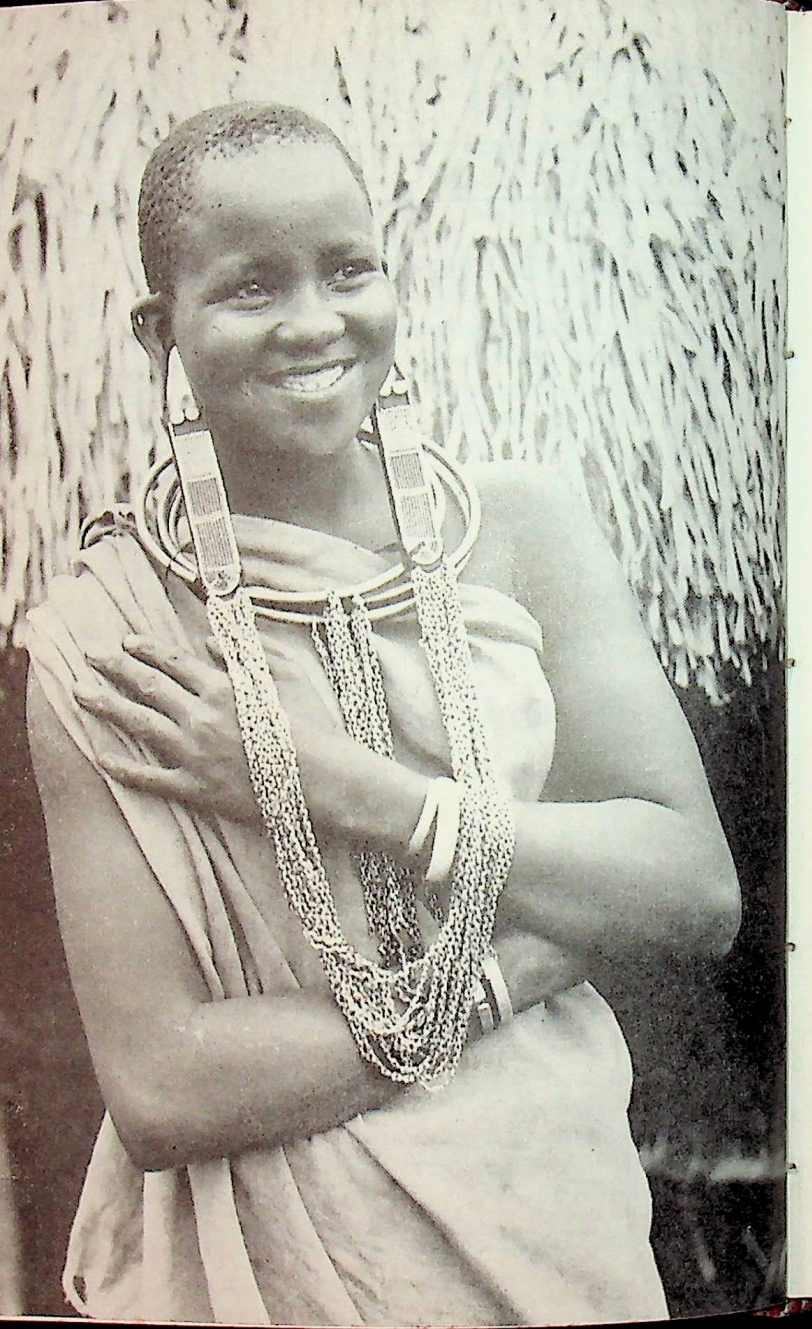
A Temple Mystery

THE EDITOR'S telephone rang and the voice of the Administrator, who is accustomed to put general knowledge questions to boys, said, "What do you know about 'the temple-haunting martlet'?" "Shakespeare", said the Editor dutifully. "Well", continued the Administrator's voice, "I always knew your department was a temple, and now there's a martlet haunting it. Lean out of your window and you'll see him building his nest in the drainpipe." With that he rang off, and the Editor, always obedient, leant precariously above Francis Street. Sure enough there was an untidy fistful of straw in the head of the drainpipe and out of it at that moment flew a bird. Only it wasn't a swallow, but just a cock-sparrow.

*The temple-haunting martlet does approve
By his loved mansionry that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.*

Actually, of course, the only thing that smells wooingly in the Editor's room is tobacco; the room is nearly ankle-deep in paper and London dust, and the air is consequently not delicate. But let Shakespeare have his way. After all, his lovely touch about the birds building was only the prelude to Macbeth's foul night of murder.

Martlets or no martlets, a murder mystery goes on month after month in the editorial 'temple'. For the last seven months the fatal scissors have been wielded—"not lightly or wantonly but discreetly and soberly"—by the hand of a fellow-conspirator. Resuming them, the Editor begs leave, in the presence of the Family, to say 'Thank you' to CHES for a good job of work.



African Tour — and Contour

WHEN I had been a couple of months in East Africa I gave a joking undertaking to Sir Charles Mortimer, a greatly respected officer of the Government and member of Toc H, that I would not write the usual tourist's book of purple patches and infallible verdicts on the country. He replied, "You ought to have done that in the first fortnight, when you knew all the answers. Now you have been here long enough to know that you know nothing." I deeply respect his judgement but find myself forced into some sort of compromise. For some report of the mission upon which I was sent to Africa is due to the membership at home, whether they read it or not, and also to the Family out there, which is awaiting it. The mistakes I am bound to make will be poor payment indeed for its members' boundless hospitality but not, I trust, gross enough to mar our true friendship. And if there is anything in the adage that 'the spectator sees most of the game', the first impressions even of an amateur (which means a 'lover') may have a value of their own.

Guides for a Stranger

The genesis of the journey was a pressing invitation to my wife and me from our two sons in Kenya. I need say no more of our joyous family reunion than that one son, an officer of the East Africa High Commission, concerned with central administration of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, and the other, a District Commissioner in the remotest part of the Northern Frontier which touches Abyssinia and Somaliland, were the best possible guides to introduce a stranger to the scenery and problems of an immense territory.

A decision of the Central Executive transformed a private visit into a Toc H mission, not only to East but to Southern Africa. Since Harry Ellison planted Toc H in the Rhodesias and the Union in 1926 the great area in the South has had its share of visitors from home. Gilbert Williams followed 'Uncle' Harry in 1927-28; Ronnie Grant (General Secretary) went out for fifteen months in 1929. In 1933-34 Headquarters 'loaned'.

as it put it, Owen Watkins (Administrative Padre) and Geoffrey Martin to South Africa—the latter for two years as General Secretary until Ronald Anderson, a South African, took over after a short period of training in England. Tubby toured Rhodesia and the Union for four months in 1935, and in that year also Michael Westropp from the North Western Area and Tom Savage from All Hallows were sent out to join the South African staff. In 1936 Owen Watkins paid another short visit: that summer it was handsomely returned by a party of over sixty South African members, men and women, invading England for our Coming-of-Age Festival. So the personal Toc H links between South Africa and what it always calls 'overseas' (as East Africa always calls it 'home') have been well maintained. It took a war to break them, and I was commissioned to do what I could in a short time to repair the chain. And as for East Africa, personal contact with home staff has been almost *nil* all these years. Its three or four Branches, scattered over those vast areas, had remained truly 'lone units' and very little was known about them at home. Fraternal greetings to them was my first charge.

Life-blood of Africa

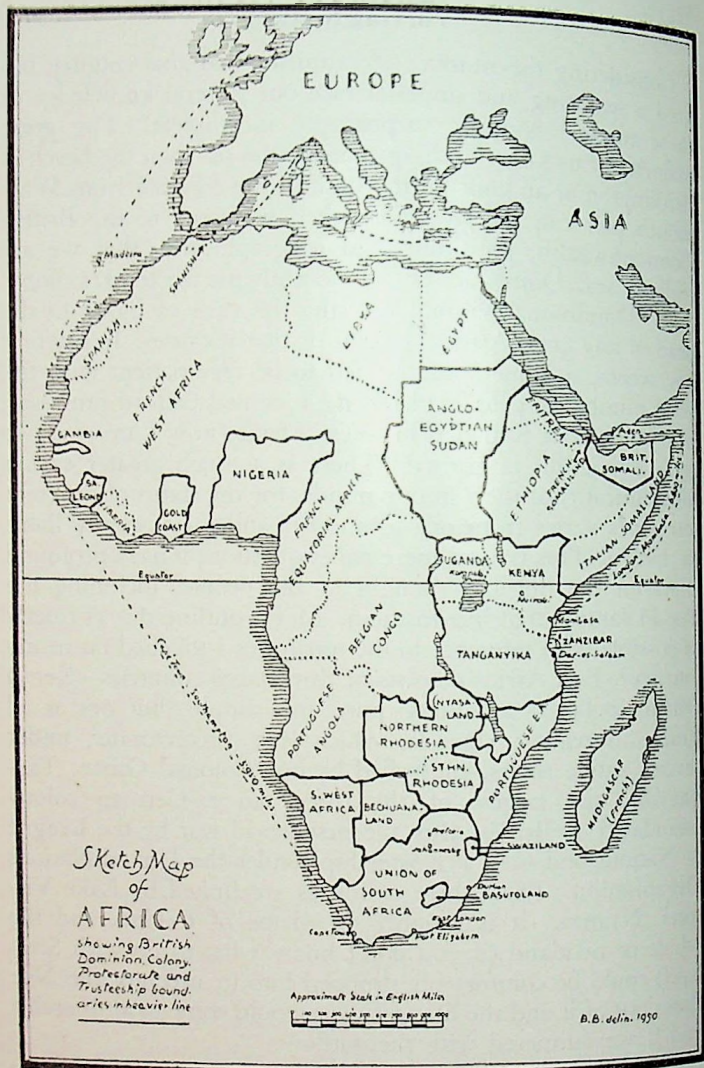
A summary of a journey, even as hasty as mine, over a large part of a very large continent, is scarcely possible in a few pages. I can attempt but a few generalisations now, but hope to fill in this outline in greater detail soon. I was absent exactly six months to the day, and in that time, in addition to the 'East Coast' voyage out of 7,000 miles and the 'West Coast' voyage home of 6,000, covered over 4,000 miles by air and travelled days and nights in trains and many long stretches by road. Some of it rougher than anything we know at home, which cannot be easily computed. In the ocean voyages, the cool winds of the Kenya Highlands, the sweltering heat of the Coast and the blessed sunshine of South Africa, I was spared even an hour's illness—so I hope my opinions are not too jaundiced. But in the whole African continent, which has no just cause to make 'rations' the staple food of conversation, it was surprising to a stranger to find the weather talked about almost as much as in our misty island. 'Rain' is the key-word, for it

is the life-blood of Africa and is often in dangerous short-supply.

Varying Status

Considering the number of centuries that this country has bred a seafaring and imperial race our general knowledge of these matters is quite surprisingly incomplete. The great majority of us know nothing more of the sea than the beach at Bridlington or an hour on the deck of the *Skylark* from Weymouth pier can tell us. It is when we come to the British Commonwealth, politically and geographically, that we are really at sea. Quite a lot of us innocently use the term 'Colony' for a 'Dominion', without noticing the rush of blood to the head of any good Aussie or Canuck that it causes. In my first few weeks at home again I tried to be very patient with the great number of people, including a learned Oxford professor, who think that Kenya is in West Africa; now I am ready to believe that this is normal. There is a much greater excuse for political confusion in our minds, for the status of different territories varies from one to another and is constantly liable to change. This is not a mere paper question; it has a profound effect on the life and thought of the people, including the 'Toc H' family, that live in them. May I outline this as briefly as possible with reference to the territories I touched on in my journey? East Africa consists of three large countries—Kenya which, so far, is a 'colony' pure and simple—but not at all simple in reality; Uganda, which is a 'protectorate', under several native rulers, controlled by our Colonial Office; Tanganyika, the largest of the three, an ex-German colony 'mandated' to Britain after the first world war by the League of Nations and now a 'trusteeship' under the United Nations Organisation. These three countries are linked by Lake Victoria Nyanza. It is roughly the shape of Ireland, and the whole of Scotland (if you don't know what to do with Scotland) could be comfortably dropped into it; much of the Nile flows out of it and the life of Egypt would come to a miserable end if we tampered with the outflow.

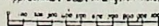
Then there is Central Africa, again consisting of three countries—Northern Rhodesia, a 'colony' under a British



Sketch Map of AFRICA

showing British
Dominion, Colony,
Protectorate and
Trustship bound-
aries in heavier line

Approximate Scale in English Miles



B.B. delin. 1950

Governor; Southern Rhodesia which became self-governing in 1923 but has not all the dignity of a Dominion; Nyasaland which is a 'protectorate'. There has been much talk for some years of these three combining and claiming 'dominion' status, but at the moment it looks unlikely.

Then there is the Union of South Africa, a 'dominion' combined after the South African War out of the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State and the old British 'colonies' of Natal and Cape Province. Under the present Government in power the Union is moving headlong towards becoming a 'republic'—whether on the present republican pattern of India within the British Commonwealth or that of Eire, which seems to be both within and without the British world as it suits the Irish best, or as the completely 'foreign' country which the extreme South African Nationalists appear to desire. The strain of these conflicting ideas is enormous and is shaking the whole of 'British' Africa.

Finally there are four territories touched or surrounded by the Union whose fate is precarious—the three 'protectorates' of Bechuanaland (which Chief Seretse Khama's marriage to a white woman has made 'news'), Basutoland and Swaziland, which claimed and received Queen Victoria's protection from the Boers and which the Union is bent on 'incorporating'; and South West Africa, an ex-German colony which was 'mandated' to the Union by the League of Nations but which the Union, alone of all 'colonial' nations in the world, refuses to put under the 'trusteeship' of U.N.O. and intends, unless prevented (how or by whom is obscure), to 'incorporate'.

Two Immense Problems

In general it may be said that two immense problems, both being tackled piecemeal but without any real solution in sight, cause daily and nightly anxiety and imperil the future of the whole of the African continent. One is imposed by Nature, abetted by the continuing carelessness and mismanagement of man—'soil erosion' which has laid waste tracts the size of Europe and swallows up thousands of fresh acres every year which might have grown food and reared families. The other

arises out of centuries of history, and the clash of races a thousand years apart in what we describe as 'civilisation'; it is the whole set of problems that we call 'race relations' or simply 'colour'.

Perhaps a sketch-map will save any more words about the geographical lay-out: it cannot give any picture of the political and social stresses. These, even more than landscape and climate, compose the atmosphere which the small family of Toc H must breathe and the background against which its work has to be undertaken. Greatly daring and after so slight a contact, I shall attempt later to give readers an impression in greater detail of a very complex situation which never stands still. For we ought all to realise the shape of things in Africa and to back our brethren there if we can. B.B.

How well was my Family

Here is an account from Dick Samck, Editor of the Phoenix of his recent whirlwind tour of Toc H Branches at home.

I SAID I wanted to see Britain and Toc H too, so '47' I arranged an itinerary covering those parts I most desired, and was able to do in five weeks. It extended over a thousand miles and allowed for visits to nearly thirty branches in England, Wales and Scotland.

During February and the early part of March I got into training by a "curtain raiser" tour of Cornwall. This included almost every unit west of Saltash and enabled me to work up a ninety-minute programme. It began with half-an-hour's talk on the history and development of Toc H in Australia with an aboriginal shield from Talbot Bay as concrete evidence, and particular emphasis on Branch life in Western Australia, followed by a comprehensive Commonwealth Government film-strip on Australia in general, to which I added a running commentary. Things fortunately went well from the start and as my experiences were extended, so were

my anecdotes. Luckily, most of my audiences had no first-hand knowledge of Australia, so I was able to put over all sorts of stories and get away with it (I hope!).

By the commencement of the major tour at Exmouth I was all set for a busy time. And so it proved. With the exception of two days' rest at St. Annes, I was almost every night 'our speaker' and every day a wide-eyed tourist. Travel was accomplished almost exclusively by railway and B.R. carried me efficiently and comfortably around Britain for less than £11.

Attendances varied. Some Branches brought in visitors from surrounding units; others included Women's Section, while yet others brought in all and sundry. Audiences ranged in numbers from eight to 107. This would about cover the age limits too. In every place, members showed me the family spirit. They were wonderful. They couldn't do enough for me. I was taken here and there, shown this and that and had to turn down scores of fascinating invitations because of time. I was always saying goodbye to people I wanted to know better. Meeting places varied too. Round back alleys, up high lofts and tucked away huts were the usual homes.

Too Modest

Concerning meeting places I made a serious point. Toc H is very homely and comfortable in its little back room, and anyway we can't afford to rent premises on the main street. But the good name of Toc H and all it stands for is scarcely known on the main street. (Do an amateur Gallup Poll and ask ten persons at random, "What do you know about Toc H?") I believe we have been far too modest in the past. While I do not champion blatant advertising, there are many subtle ways of publicity open to a wide-awake Branch. (Plymouth have a board on the station as you give up your ticket. St. Annes have a large arrow attached to an electric light pole).

No harm can result and at least, attendances should be improved and recruiting stimulated.

Many Branches sought special accommodation for the evening because of the small size of their usual room. So I found myself in shops, hotel basements, halls, cafés and political club rooms. In Falmouth they had temporary use of a barber's

shop. It was a bit small and some of the chaps had to sit in the wash-basins. But it was a good place. If they ran out of programmes they could cut each other's hair.

At Wellington, we met in the Darby and Joan Hut and I think they must have collected everybody over ninety for miles around. Hands were cupped to ears, ear-trumpets were plentiful and when I asked for a walking-stick as a pointer—there were dozens!

I mustn't forget the Marks. They had been good to me. Bristol, Birmingham and Liverpool had put me up, while Newcastle served me a very excellent evening meal. I stayed too at the now obsolete Mark VIII at Sheffield. But I wasn't long enough anywhere to offer a fair criticism and of their internal spirit I knew very little.

A difficult Job

I met some delightful and excellent fellows among the Marksmen, but I was disappointed that so many were not members of Toc H. In one Mark I was informed that nobody, bar the Warden, was a member. It would be unfair to weigh one Mark against another. Each, though basically the same, had its own individuality but I cannot let the opportunity pass without paying tribute to 'Mother' of Gladstone House, Liverpool, whose personality and kindliness I think could not be exceeded. I met only two Wardens: Jack of Birmingham and Warren of Bristol and I cannot imagine two more ably fitted. The Marks are attempting to do a very difficult job and I think they are succeeding slowly. Much patience and organisation and particularly co-operation from local Toc H Branches is needed, and given the right team work from all, much more will be accomplished. If I have any criticism to make about Mark life, it is trivial and concerns such minor irritations as lack of bolts on lavatories and bathroom doors. Surely a Mark is not an institution.

I found Toc H in Wales well represented, with some fine fellows, but some Branches not particularly broad in their outlook. In one valley, I came across a unit which didn't believe in contributing to the Family Purse at all. But could they sing!

Scotland, I discovered, was not a great Toc H stronghold—at least, in numbers. Individually, Scotch hospitality was outstanding, but meetings generally were on a smaller scale.

And after a riotous *finale* in the North of England, my tour ended, although I visited Whitstable Branch for good measure during Council week. From my own point of view it had been a tremendous success, much more than I had ever dreamed. I feel, too, from the generous and sincere comments I received everywhere, that my labours had not been in vain.

A Stranger Calls

But I had still not seen a normal Toc H meeting. Having obtained the dates and addresses of several S.W. London units, I selected one at random and visited it as a complete stranger to Toc H, minus badge or other identification. I wanted to see how they would react to a possible recruit. At 8 p.m. I was still alone. At 8.5 they turned up; about ten of them, not very young. I was received well and asked my name. I gave half of it, and the Chairman said he couldn't place my 'language', which was lucky. When the visitors' book came round, I signed 'Dick Barton'. After half-an-hour's rambling business and a cup of tea (nothing to eat)—a speaker gave an address on a Christian topic—and that was that.

Here, I believe, we have the answer to "Why aren't we getting young fellows into Toc H?" Because Branch meetings may suffer chronically from lack of variety. There may be no programme. In the old days, a Toc H meeting was a riotous affair (but with its serious moments too). Everybody joined in and did something, even if it was only community singing. There was variety. It was a case of 'a little of what you fancy'—and the younger chaps did fancy it.

I realise, of course, that I am basing my criticism on one lone visit, but from talks to numerous chairmen and others up and down the country, I believe that there's nothing wrong with Toc H, but individual Branches might pull themselves out of a routine in which they have stagnated, that profit and pleasure may be the result.

In brief, I found Toc H in Britain to be on a larger scale than I had anticipated and exceedingly well organised—

perhaps too well. I could not readily find any evidence of corporate jobs, though each Branch seemed to be well occupied. Jobmasters appeared to have little say in the few business sessions I was permitted to see. Surely his office is of the highest importance? The blind are well looked after and at seven of my meetings they were represented.

Summing up, I have been privileged to meet many of the Family and I would ask that when the World Chain of Light ceremony comes around next December, you spare us a thought in Western Australia where this family link was first lit in 1929.

Through my travels, I have found Toc H in Britain to be very much the same as at home. The same goodhearted fellowship—the same mistakes—the same chap coming in late—all contributed to making me feel at home. And so I shall leave it at that for my leave has nearly run its course and I must go from refreshment to labour—back to the Bush!

DICK SAMEK.

East Anglian Area Festival

THE RAIN STOPPED and the sun broke through the clouds as the Choir in their scarlet cassocks passed through the West Door of Norwich Cathedral and moved up the Nave singing the Hymn "Come, thou holy Spirit, come". So began the first East Anglian Festival for some seventeen years. Eight hundred men and women filled the nave, aisles and triforia and gave the lie to any suggestion that the Family has lost the art of singing. The Dean, a valued member of Toc H, received the Banners as he stood before the Nave altar. (Did he not rehearse the Banner Bearers for half an hour before the Service?) The Lesson was read by the Area Secretary, and the Sermon preached by the Area Padre. In the evening the Family assembled in St. Andrew's Hall, once the Church of the Dominicans (Blackfriars), which was built in the fifteenth century. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress attended, and

the Sheriff and his Lady, who had already been at the Cathedral, were also present. In his welcome to Toc H in East Anglia the Lord Mayor said, "The country needs more and more of the adventure, courage and spirit of Toc H"; and this theme was echoed in the forceful and witty speeches of Mrs. Twinch and Jack Shaw.

Dusk was beginning to fall as the Procession of Banners, Lamps and Rushlights moved down the Hall to the platform to the singing of "Out of many into one are we fashioned this night"; and as the Lamps and Rushlights were being lighted from the Lamp which had just been presented to Brightlingsea, the Family sang the Hymn "Thou whose Almighty word . . . Let there be Light!"

At the end of the evening everyone heard with very real regret—the audible gasp proved this—that Peter Raban, the Area Secretary, was leaving for the North Western Area.

Shortly after 8.30 the last car and bus left Norwich for the journey home, in some cases a journey of nearly eighty miles; but there is reason to believe that no one thought the journey had been in vain. As for those who had borne most of the responsibility for the organising of the Festival—rumour has it that with the speakers they resorted to a certain hostelry and there refreshed themselves in what they considered to be an appropriate manner. J.D.

The Founder Padre

Tubby asks Branches to note that all invitations sent direct to him to be present at their guest-nights are passed on to Toc H Headquarters. He regards it as unfair on all concerned to employ a method that causes the use of extra time and labour. It is best for Branches and District Teams to consult their Area officers in the first instance as to whether there is any chance of a visit being fitted into a tour in the same neighbourhood.

Cases of charity, employment, passports and pension papers must on no account be personally addressed to the Founder Padre.

The Elder Brethren

BAKER.—On May 19, CHARLES J. BAKER, aged 72, a founder member of Streatham Branch. Elected 1.9.'21.

BROOKSHAW.—On January 20, JOHN E. BROOKSHAW, aged 82, a member of Kirkby-in-Ashfield Branch. Elected 9.6.'33.

COLEMAN.—On May 17, WALTER BUCKLEY COLEMAN, aged 43, a member of Manchester Area Branch. Elected 5.2.'40.

DERRICK.—On April 17, ERNEST WILLIAM DERRICK, a member of Aylesbury Branch. Elected 12.12.'47.

GUNSTON.—On March 12 in Argentina, MONTAGUE C. GUNSTON ('Pop'), a founder member of Buenos Aires Branch.

HAYNES.—On May 6, RICHARD EVERARD HAYNES, a former Chairman of Hereford Branch. Elected 19.3.'28.

JOHNSON.—On May 6, AUBREY R. JOHNSON, a member of Dudley Branch. Elected 7.3.'33.

LARGE.—On April 27, DAVID WALTER LARGE, aged 75, a member of Bowers Gifford Branch. Elected 24.3.'49.

MACLAGAN.—On January 7, WILLIAM MACLAGAN, aged 75, a member of Rotherham Branch. Elected 1.2.'25.

MORISON.—On June 1, Dr. ERNEST FREDERICK MORISON, D.D. aged 67, a founder member of Fakenham Branch. Elected 19.7.'33.

PLEDGER.—On May 10, JAMES WILLIAM PLEDGER, aged 69, a founder member of Mildenhall Branch. Elected 3.3.'49.

RITCHIE.—On May 28, JAMES RITCHIE, aged 74, a member of Nairn Branch. Elected 5.3.'46.

SHARROCK.—On February 14, ARTHUR SHARROCK, aged 37, a member of Salford (Mark XIV) Branch. Elected 2.7.'35.

WILLIAMS.—On April 30, DAVID JAMES WILLIAMS, a founder member of Upminster Branch. Elected 14.6.'35.

WILLIAMS.—On May 7, JAMES BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, aged 47, the Chairman of Crewe Branch. Elected 1.10.'35.

WILLIAMSON.—On May 25, FRANCIS WILLIAMSON, aged 57, a member of Pinner Branch. Elected 28.1.'48.

Areas Surveyed VII—SCOTLAND



TOC H lists Scotland geographically as a Region with three constituent Divisions; in fact it is a country. The character of its people has been forged in a thousand-year-long history of bitter internal struggles for secular or religious power, of clan feuds and of Border raiding, all lit gloriously by the long, desperate, national fight for freedom from the oppression of its southern neighbour. Apart from this enmity, there was little common to the histories of the two nations until the last three hundred years. Small wonder then that Scotland's people should have an outlook different in many ways from their English cousins, and should combine intense local loyalties with a deep sense of unity as Scots.

This unity in diversity is reflected clearly in our units and Districts. Each displays its own peculiar local character, yet each is probably more conscious of being part of Toc H Scotland, than of the Division in which it is situated.

Central and South Western Division.

This Division is roughly a square of over one hundred miles a side! However, although it covers the area south of a line drawn from Oban to Glenfarg and includes all the territory west of the eastern boundaries of the counties of Perth, Clackmannan, Stirling, Lanark and Dumfries, all its thirty Branches lie within the western half of the Industrial Belt where, in an area about forty miles long and thirty-three miles deep, half Scotland's five million people live.

The reason for this comparative concentration of the movement is largely one of distance; from the centre at Glasgow it is four hours' rail journey to Oban in the North West or Stranraer in the South West, and, until stepping stones can be provided, these and many other localities on the mainland and in the Western Islands must remain without Toc H units. The plan, hampered by the continuing 'export' of young members to the Empire and the usual post-war 'settling-down'

difficulties, is, therefore, consolidation at the centre before systematic spreading to the remoter places.

After visiting Glasgow, city of a million souls and the industrial heart of Scotland where Toc H Branches are now reaching out to the suburbs, the traveller turns north by Kilsyth, sheltering under the Campsie Fells, to Falkirk District, where the men of the five-strong Branches can tell you of the beginnings in 1760 of the Scottish iron industry hereabouts. Thence he goes on to the Royal Burgh of Stirling, magnificently situated round its castle-crowned Rock and often in the past the focus of the struggle for Scottish independence. Sassenach or not, you will be firmly escorted to the nearby field of Bannockburn and reminded of the stirring event there in 1314.

Coalmining and agriculture are the industries here, with brewing and electrical engineering at Alloa in Clackmannan, and woollen spinning and knitting at Tillicoultry at the foot of the Ochil range where a young unit is boldly serving the small community.

West of Glasgow, we pass the yards that cradled the *Queen Elizabeth*; visit the port of Greenock, famous for marine engines and sugar refining; and sail across the lovely Firth of Clyde to Dunoon under the massive Cowal Hills, where a Branch flourishes in splendid isolation; or South West, *via* Paisley with its ancient Abbey and great thread mills, we run down to Ayrshire's pleasant seaside resorts and reach, with their memories of Robert Burns, the Royal Burgh of Irvine and the busy industrial town of Kilmarnock, where the world-famous Ayrshire cattle are sold to buyers "frae a' the airts".

The last journey from our centre takes us South East through the steel towns of the Lanarkshire coalfield, until finally we reach Carluke in the lovely valley of the upper Clyde, its orchards ablaze with blossom in the spring of the year.

D.J.B.

South Eastern Division.

The South East Scotland Division like "All Gaul" is divided into three parts—the "Kingdom" of Fife, between the estuaries of the Forth and Tay, the Lothians between the Forth and the Moorfoot and Lammermuir Hills, and in the South "the Borders".

The Lothians include East Lothian, the Garden of Scotland, Mid and West Lothian dotted with the bings of coal and shale mines, but including the unspoiled beauty of the Pentland Hills—R.L.S.'s "Hills of Home", and, of course, the City of Edinburgh, which needs no description. Toc H in Edinburgh has a District Team, two Branches, plenty of General members, great enthusiasm and prospects of several more units.

Scotsmen are well known to be independent, thrifty, hardy, hospitable—continue the list as you please. Fifers are more so, whether they are miners in West Fife, linoleum manufacturers in Kirkcaldy, fishermen in the picturesque villages on the East Fife coast or caddies at St. Andrews. Toc H in Fife is represented by the West Fife District Team and two Branches, in the historic town of Dunfermline and the new town of Oakley. Further developments are expected.

However independent, thrifty, etc., other Scotsmen and Fifers may be, the Borderers are even more so. They live in a countryside of great beauty containing a few small towns mostly engaged in woollen manufacturing, the ruins of four famous Abbeys and numerous grim square ruined 'Keeps' to remind one of the constant wars and raids which constitute the history of the district. Seven Branches in six towns send representatives to the Border District Team and in spirited rivalry find fellowship and inspiration.

In South East Scotland Toc H though weak numerically is in good heart. It has done excellent work but its best still lies ahead.

G.H.S.

Northern Division.

In extent, the Northern Division is much larger than any other Toc H Area in Britain; in population, it is among the smallest. Its area is about 17,000 square miles, that is, more than half of Scotland or about one third of the size of England. Its inhabitants number a million odd, not many more than in Glasgow or Birmingham.

Much of the country is included in the Highland counties, with their unsurpassed grandeur of mountain, glen and loch, but it is essential to appreciate that the eastern coastal belt from the Tay to Inverness is low-lying and fertile, and that, in that

SCOTLAND

SCOTLAND

Regions: Northern, Central, South, Eastern, Western

Inset of Central Valley: OCHILS, CASTLECARLY, EAST RENFREW, GLASGOW, FALKIRK

Other Labels: MORAY & NAIRN, PERTH & ANGUS, WEST FIFE, DUNDEE, NORTH AYRSHIRE, CENTRAL AYRSHIRE, LANARKSHIRE, EDINBURGH, BORDEAUX

Numbered Points: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

INSET OF
CENTRAL VALLEY

OCHILS

CASTLE CARY

EAST
RENFREW

FALKIRK

GLASGOW

Central

DUNOON

NORTH
AYRSHIRE

CENTRAL
AYRSHIRE

LANARKSHIRE

WEST FIVE

EDINBURGH

South

South

Eastern

Western

quarter of the whole, live four-fifths of the population. The main centres are the cities of Aberdeen and Dundee, the fishing ports of the North East, and the scattered country towns and holiday resorts from Inverness and Nairn to Forfar and Carnoustie.

The land structure is such that communication inland from the East coast always has been difficult, and even today through access by road or rail to the Central or West Highlands is limited to the Spey or Ness valleys in the North, and the Tay basin in Perthshire. The history of all the North is turbulent, but throughout the centuries this physical barrier has led to different experience and influences affecting the two parts, with consequent divergence of character, interest, thought and custom. One result of this is that no city or town has emerged

KEY TO TOC II BRANCHES AND GROUPS ON MAP OPPOSITE.

Central and South Western Division.

1. CASTLECARY DISTRICT: Bonnybridge, Cumbernauld, Denny, Kilsyth.
2. CENTRAL Ayrshire DISTRICT: Irvine, Kilmarnock, Troon.
3. RENFREWSHIRE DISTRICT: Barrhead, Neilston, Paisley, Greenock.
4. FALKIRK DISTRICT: Camelon, Falkirk Central, Falkirk South, Larbert, Polmont.
5. GLASGOW DISTRICT: Glasgow, Glasgow Western, Polmadie, Shettleston.
6. LANARKSHIRE DISTRICT: Carluke, Hamilton, Law, Uddingston, Wishaw.
7. NORTH Ayrshire DISTRICT: Largs, West Kilbride.
8. OCHILS DISTRICT: Alloa, Stirling, Tillicoultry.
9. UNATTACHED: DUNOON.

South Eastern Division.

10. BORDER DISTRICT: Duns, Galashiels, Jedburgh, Kelso, Ladhope, Selkirk.
11. EDINBURGH DISTRICT: Edinburgh, *Morningside*, Stockbridge.
12. WEST FIFE DISTRICT: Dunfermline, Oakley.

Northern Division.

13. MORAY & NAIRN DISTRICT: Elgin, Nairn, *St. Ninian's (Nairn)*.
14. PERTH & ANGUS DISTRICT: Brechin, Coupar Angus, Crieff, *Dundee*, Perth.

as a dominating and natural centre. Parts of the East do look to Aberdeen or Dundee, but much of the Highlands turns to Glasgow or Edinburgh.

On such ground, the problems of distance, communication and isolation are serious. In its first incursions of the North, Toc H rightly and with some success, endeavoured to establish units in the more populous East. Even in the pre-war days of unlimited motoring, it was a hard struggle which several of the units could not maintain. With the limitation of motoring, these difficulties became so much more acute that only the strongest units could survive, and the end of the war found us with one Branch in Nairn, and, centring on Perth (130 miles away by road or rail), a District with three Branches scattered over two large counties.

Rebuilding, based on these two points, can be neither easy nor rapid, but the progress made is sound. In the North there now are three units forming a small but promising District, which is a first step towards the development of the whole Moray coast. In Perth and Angus District, the formation of Dundee gives promise of an early division of the present District, a step necessary both to lessen the strain on existing units (one is involved in a round trip of 100 miles taking eight hours to attend Team meetings), and to open the way for another advance up the coast towards Aberdeen.

Difficult as it is, this task of building soundly in the East can be done, but even with that accomplished, there will remain the question of the Highlands. We have no more than a toe-hold in southern Perthshire but we never have been in a position to think seriously about, far less attempt, tackling the small Highland communities, so scattered and isolated that it is doubtful if our normal District organisation ever could function. Is there a rôle which Toc H ought to play in a part of our own country, where a complication of causes have led to a hundred years of depopulation, which, in some cases has led to the abandoning of small townships, because the population has dwindled below the level at which essential services can be maintained? If so, is it a responsibility for the Northern Division, for Toc H Scotland or for the whole movement?

A.M.J.

A Helping Hand

MANY MEMBERS of Toc H who were disabled in either of the World Wars have had first-hand experience of the Ministry of Pensions' Welfare Service. Others have been able to play a small part in that service, as members of War Pensions Committees or Voluntary Workers, by visiting patients in the Ministry's hospitals or the seriously disabled in their homes. These members in particular and Toc H members generally will be interested in the Minister of Pensions recently announced plan to help those pensioners who are confined to their homes and unable to work.

Experience has shown that the most frequent complaint made by these severely disabled pensioners is the lack of something of interest to occupy their minds, causing boredom and ill-effects on their health. The Arts and Crafts are an ideal way of preventing boredom by satisfying the creative instincts and their value is well illustrated by the changed outlook of those pensioners who have already taken up a homecraft. The Minister is anxious that every home-bound or unemployable pensioner (of whom there are about 20,000) should be given the opportunity to occupy himself with some sort of homecraft. This is a big undertaking requiring a concerted effort to co-ordinate and make the best use of the available resources so that the needs of the pensioners can be fully met and each pensioner given encouragement, help and advice.

The plan is not rigid and the Minister recognises that it may develop in different ways in different localities. For instance, in some areas it may be possible to develop homecraft centres where groups of pensioners can be brought together once or twice a week and taught different crafts. He therefore proposes to entrust the working of the plan to Homecrafts Sub-Committees of the War Pensions Committees which function throughout the country and to which would be co-opted members of the voluntary associations who are actively interested in the work. Each Sub-Committee will work in close collaboration with the Ministry's Regional Rehabilitation and

Welfare Unit which has the responsibility for helping to promote homecrafts within the Region.

Some Toc H Branches may be asked by the Chairman of the War Pensions Committee to lend a hand in this grand job, e.g. by appointing a member to serve on the Homecrafts Sub-Committee, by lending Branch Headquarters for use as a Homecraft Centre, or by transporting pensioners to the Centre. Members who are able to teach a simple craft could use their skill for the benefit of the severely disabled to whom we owe so much. Offers of help will be welcome and should be made to the appropriate Chief Regional Officer, Ministry of Pensions, whose address may be obtained from any Post Office.

W. E. CAIN.

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❖ Congratulations to Lt.-Col. HERBERT SHINER, Chairman of West Sussex County Council, a Vice-President of Toc H and at one time Hon. Warden of Mark I, on receiving the honour of Knighthood.

❖ TOC H IN THE EASTERN CANADA REGION have asked the Central Executive to permit a visit for a year by the Administrative Padre. This has been agreed and Padre and Mrs. HERBERT LEGGATE will be sailing for Toronto early in September.

❖ The Area Padre in Wales, SHAUN HERRON, has been appointed Assistant Editor of *The British Weekly*. He leaves the Toc H Staff, but not Toc H, with our thanks and best wishes.

❖ The following moves of Area Secretaries will be taking place soon: CHARLES YOUNG from South Yorkshire to the Western Area; REG SMITH from the West to the East Anglian Area; PETER RABAN from East Anglia to the North-Western Area, whence JIM McCLENAHAN goes for a period to live in Brotherton House, Leeds, and to work in the Mark and the Yorkshire Areas.

☛ Padre DICK TUESDAY will be moving to Southampton to become Southern Area Padre. In his place, ERIC SAYWELL will be leaving the Notts. and Derby Area to become Oxford and Thames Valley Area Secretary.

☛ BEN MILES, late of Malta, is now Eastern London Area Secretary and also Forces Secretary at Headquarters.

☛ HARRY ASHTON has returned to England and is happily installed in other work on resigning from the Services Staff in B.A.O.R.

☛ WARREN GRIFFIN has completed his term as a Marks Pilot and has left Mark IX, Bristol; our thanks and best wishes to him.

☛ TOM GREGORY will be returning from the Services Staff in B.A.O.R. to resume for a period his work as a Marks Pilot.

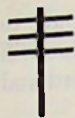
☛ The nominations of candidates as CENTRAL COUNCILLORS for 1950-52 are to be made by Branches by July 15.

☛ Toc H Builders and General Members who wish to attend the FESTIVAL in London on November 18 are asked to notify the Festival Secretary at Headquarters now. Branch Members who have not already made provisional bookings for themselves and their friends are asked to do so through their Secretaries now.

☛ THE WORLD CHAIN OF LIGHT was first started in Perth, Western Australia, twenty-one years ago. This year the Central Executive have invited the Australian Executive to make arrangements. The Chain will be started in Adelaide at 9 p.m. on Monday, December 11, and observed in Toc H westwards to the Pacific, including this country, at the same time locally in turn. In New Zealand and in Australia east of Adelaide it will be observed at 9 p.m. on December 12.

☛ POSTAGE STAMPS are wanted and welcomed by the Hon. Secretary, Toc H Stamp Appeal, 142, St. Margaret's Road, Edgware, Middlesex; all used ones from overseas and those from Great Britain from 3d. upwards.

☛ The next issue of this JOURNAL will be in September, not in August. We wish all our readers and ourselves a happy holiday.



Far Cry



ONCE UPON A WEDDING DAY

MANY OF US in this country are far more conscious of Toc H in Western Australia than we ever were a few months ago. The reason is that Dick Samek, Editor of the *W. A. Phoenix*, has been among us and has toured nearly thirty Branches between Cornwall and the North, discovering Toc H England for himself and helping us to discover Western Australia. He has been a complete refresher course in itself, reminding us again that Toc H may take root in almost any soil and yet remain essentially the same. While he stumped the countryside his colleague and Area Treasurer, Len Smoothy, became a familiar and very welcome figure at Francis Street. It is rather as a salutation to Western Australia, and our two friends in particular, that the following narrative is shamelessly extracted and reproduced from a past *Link*. But as the introduction says, "Let Tom Bennett tell his story of Toc H under shimmering skies".

Listen you birds, this is no joke . . . Fate, or what have you, deals some awfully low cracks at times, and this one was lower than usual.

A good cove this, one of those rare birds that really *lives* Toc H. An idealist gone real. And a game battler. Starting from scratch, he pioneered his block, improved it slowly but surely, bit by bit, through good and bad seasons, only they were mostly bad, and the backbone of it all was sheep. Don't forget those sheep. They were a sort of bank, a security. They built fences, bought plant, paid the bills when the wheat failed, they bought timber and iron in small lots over the years, with which a house was built. A real house mind you, one that would do credit to a first-class tradesman. He wasn't really that—it was just his spare time job, and he had picked up a bit of carpentry. I chuckled to myself about the spare time! But at last it was completed, at least enough to bring a bride to. And while the battle wasn't half won really, and it was going to be touch and go to keep ahead, nobody was getting any younger and the years really *were* slipping by. So what the heck! off we go to South Australia to marry and fetch home the bride.



A sheep-tank, fed by springs, in Western Australia.

I don't know what his wedding day was like in South Australia, but here it was a clinker. The third and worst of one of those three-day "hellers" we get in late summer. A searing North-easter, and a blistering sun, when the water bats get a-doing. That was the day tragedy stalked that good bloke's paddocks. The day that those sheep, built up over the years to a rattling good flock of big framed ewes, died a horrible death, in all sorts of queer places and postures, died by the hundred.

It was nobody's fault. The caretakers were blameless, the circumstances a mystery still. The water just got turned off and that was that. But that scene of evil smelling death, especially around the trough, I'll never forget . . . *And on his wedding day!*

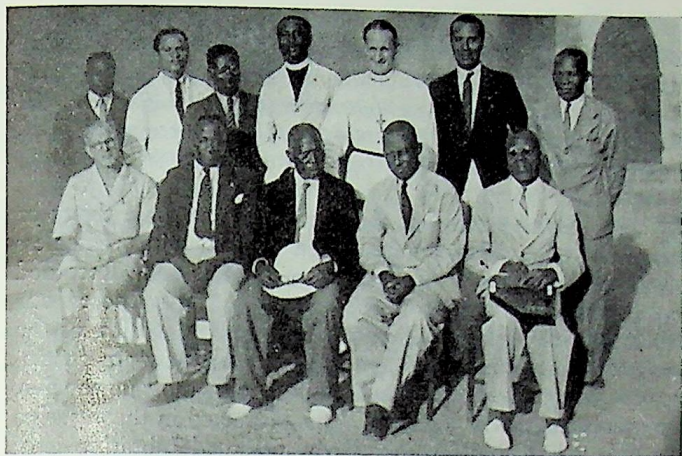
But our friend had put a lot into Toc H and had many good friends outside as well. Before he was even told the news, sheep had been brought from far and wide, the best from good flocks, with a big percentage of breeding ewes. Nothing could replace the flock, bred up like that over the years but at least the numbers were replaced. And then the big clean up had to be tackled. And how those blokes worked, organising, transporting, collecting, branding, feeding the survivors. And did it cost them plenty!

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

The Western Province Charity Bioscopes are sponsored by Toc H in and around Cape Town, and their latest Annual Report opens with this statement :—

The past year has probably been the most outstanding in the fifteen years of our existence. Not only did it see the attainment of our long-cherished ambition to go over to sound projection, but the tempo of our activities was stepped up to the point where shows were being given on every single night of the week. Complete continuity at all hospitals and institutes on our regular circuit was maintained and not a single engagement went unfulfilled.

They organise free film shows, for the benefit of "Juveniles, Orphans, Cripples, Aged and Infirm Persons, or any person suffering a disability, without discrimination as to race or creed". Their film contract is with Pan-African Film Services Ltd. who have offered them most generous terms, and a programme consists of 'shorts' followed by a full-length feature, the projection time being about two hours. The regular circuit involved thirty-three showings to twenty-six institutions per four-weekly cycle, and audiences average 2,500 handicapped persons each month. During the year, 119 "silent" and 251 "sound" shows were given by twenty-nine volunteer projectionists working on an efficiently organised duty rota. These are only statistics, but anyone with an ounce of imagination and the most elementary knowledge of cinema work will appreciate the amount of labour involved and reliability demanded. The projectionists arrange their own transport and pay for it, but even so the budget for the current year was £850. A ceiling projector from America, apparently the first to be used in South Africa, is now available, together with an initial library of thirty books by well-known authors. A photograph shows it being used by a small girl of ten who has to lie for months on her back; she is using it to look at a favourite picture book. Toc H in Durban also has its cinema team, operating on a necessarily smaller scale. What all this means to the audiences can easily be guessed, but the helpers get their own reward in "the joy to be seen on the faces of the little ones and the personal and lasting friendships built up in the course of their duties".



GAMBIA

A photograph has been received from Bathurst Group in Gambia. John Daly (Bishop of Gambia and Rio Pongas) is in the back row, Bill Haythornthwaite of Plymouth is sitting on the left in the front row and Frank Macauley, the Secretary, is next to him. Bathurst is now the only group of Toc H in West Africa.

It began during the war on the initiative of the Bishop and the various Service members stationed there. Some Africans became interested and joined them, and in due course the Service men came home leaving the Bathurst members to continue on their own. Since then they have continued to meet regularly, to supply blankets and warmer clothing to the old people in the Infirmary, to collect vast quantities of medicine bottles for the Dispensary in the Upper River, to visit the hospital and so forth. Quite a number of other Toc H members are scattered about Nigeria and the Gold Coast and one of these days we hope to see Toc H usefully alive in Lagos and Accra. That would be an event as welcome in Bathurst as in London.

G.M.

In the Garden

We were beginning to get quite anxious about raising our own particular brand of 'giant gooseberry' this summer, when KEN. THOMAS, of Pwllleli, gallantly weighed-in with this article.

THE LIBRARY in our Branch consists of some thirty or more books and pamphlets in which, with matchless enthusiasm, is written the complete story of Toc H. Recorded there is the story of its formation, its aims and purposes, our Royal Charter, tales of the early days and a wealth of the kind of information which members old and new are continually seeking. But—these books appear to be most unpopular. Four only out of the total have been borrowed in the past five weeks! Why is this? As a newly-appointed Librarian I set about the task of trying to solve this problem. It was not easy. I could find no answer written in the splendid books I have just mentioned. And then, more or less by accident, I picked up a recent copy of the JOURNAL, our monthly magazine. Yes, here was the solution. Here, with very few exceptions is the most uninteresting literature I have come across! The members, reading the JOURNAL month after month have become, in my opinion so disinterested that to contemplate reading a volume of more than fifty pages written in the same style, they think, as the JOURNAL is too much for them. But, the older books are written in a manner now seemingly lost to Toc H literature. At the risk of severe criticism I say that, if we are to interest our members in the great works that have gone before, the style of the widely-circulated monthly JOURNAL should undergo a thorough change!

Brighter Blooms

While I say this, I am not for one moment casting any doubt on the sincerity of the contributors. I have never doubted that a great faith beats behind their pens but, for goodness' sake why can't they break down their literary efforts into the everyday, chatty style which we so enjoy at our weekly meetings?

But it is not merely the authors' style that is dull. Something could be done to brighten up the whole of the paper, a medium which could and should be of the utmost value to us. We are wasting its powers. How many of us, if we but admit it, look at the magazine each month and say—"Oh! Here's the old JOURNAL again", and dutifully bring out the odd sixpence! Yes. It *is* the old JOURNAL again, with its drearily familiar orange cover; its little bill of contents printed over the silhouette of the Lamp. How much brighter our little magazine could be, if the front page at least were freshly set? Why not a photograph on the cover? Don't think that I am visualising the JOURNAL as a miniature edition of one of our National picture papers, with a bathing beauty lolling languidly across the front page—far from it, but how about a view of Toc H Marks, or a pleasing landscape? Would the cost of such an innovation be so much higher? I think not, but any increase would surely be justified by its freshening up of the Toc H reader's jaded palate. And now, to the inner pages!

Hardy Annuals

Page One could contain the list of contents, set out more attractively. Going further, let us tear out those eternal close-typed pages with their dreary looking heads and sub-heads strung out across the whole breadth and substitute a two-column page with a wider variety of type. A bright little sketch could illustrate some point in an article and catch the reader's eye even if the ponderous opening phrases repelled him! And what magazine is complete nowadays without a short or even a short-short story? We could have one with, if you like a Toc H moral. Then there are those wasted inside cover pages. They should be utilised to the full. Photographs? Each issue contains some but which are set out in a way that hardly justifies the trouble somebody has taken to obtain them. Couldn't these be set out in a complete spread in the centre pages?

Now these are just ideas, ideas which can be added to. They could help to make our magazine which is by reason of its regular appearance, more colourful and attractive. If the member could see an attractive cover on his JOURNAL at least,

how much more readily would the sixpences flow—paid from genuine interest and not as a sense of duty!

And now, one more suggestion before this acid pen is laid aside. Whilst making our literature more attractive for the member, why not also make it so for the public? Let us have more of our publications and pamphlets available to them, on the news stands and bookstalls. They would surely like to read more of us, our aims and beliefs. Let them partake of the good thing also. For it is from the world's great public that we have sprung! To misquote from Rudyard Kipling a phrase mentioned in Tubby's book, *Tales of Talbot House*:

“What shall they know of Talbot House
Who only the ground floor know?”

K.T.

Branch Briefs

■ Members of GODALMING have been granted permission to visit on any day of the week, any patient at the King George V Sanatorium, who is unlikely to have any other visitors. Friends of patients should contact the Branch Secretary: Lt.-Col. F. K. Thompson, Holme Lodge, Nightingale Road, Godalming, Surrey.

■ By the beginning of the year MILL HILL had raised £300 for a new film projector, and are now well in the swing with regular film shows.

■ MORVAL, who received their Lamp at the recent S.W. Area Festival, found an unusual corporate job when they collected primroses for the decoration of All Hallows' Church.

■ *Spotlight*, the quarterly news-sheet of SANDWELL (Birmingham) has a postal circulation of 140, plus some 60 direct copies. With it goes out the printed Branch programme, combined with that of the Women's Section, which is one of the best efforts we have seen.

■ To entertain holiday visitors, PORT ISAAC (Cornwall) have organised a series of dances and concerts, and intend devoting the proceeds to their Old Folks Christmas party.

■ During the past winter, WORCESTER presented a film show every fortnight in the wards of the Royal Infirmary.

■ The Blind Social Club run by LEYTONSTONE has had another successful year. The number of blind persons on the club's book is now forty-three women and forty-two men.

■ When CHERTSEY held their first Guest-night recently, they were supported by visitors from WALTON, WEYMOUTH, GUILDFORD and WORKING.

■ Some twenty years ago, SEVENOAKS gave a party to the old people of the town. Recently, the twenty-first anniversary party was held with nearly 200 guests—four times the number that attended the first party.

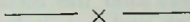
■ To celebrate their foundation in 1925, GLOUCESTER held a Jubilee Dinner, which was largely attended. Earlier in the day a large congregation was present at a Thanksgiving Service at St. John's Church.

■ For disabled folk, especially those who cannot easily get about, ROWDITCH have started a fortnightly club at St. Luke's Church House, Derby.

■ An entry from Columbus' Log-book. "To-day we sail on," was the theme when HAMILTON recently celebrated their Twenty-first Birthday.

■ A barrel organ played in the streets by WALTON-ON-THAMES members helped to collect for the Lord Mayor's Thanksgiving Fund.

■ The central attraction of AXMINSTER's new quarters is a fine fire-place constructed by a member.



It Couldn't Be YOUR Branch!

With apologies to Carson Robinson and Peter Lind Hayes.

We meet each week in the same old place;
The bloke beside us has the same old face;
The meeting goes on—at the same old pace:
Life gets "teejus", don't it?

We really should commence at eight—
We're only forty minutes late.
What don't get done will have to wait—
We'll all be here next week!

We start with Light; the flame burns high,
Splutters awhile, then starts to die
And the Lamp goes out—'cos the wick's gone dry.
We'll have to fix it someday.

We had our meetings nicely planned
But the programme just got out of hand.
We hope our guests will understand—
We do have speakers sometimes.

We talk and talk, then talk some more;
Fag-ends lie thick upon the floor—
These ash-trays are an awful bore!
Somebody'll clear the mess up!

The treasurer tries to raise some "bebs",
"Jobby" bewails the dearth of jobs;
If we opened our eyes as well as our gobs
We might start doing somethin'.

We'd have some tea about this hour
But the gas-ring's choked, so there's not much
power,
And the sugar's done—and the milk's gone sour.
Who'd like a glass of water?

We've tried with all our might and main
To get new men—but all in vain;
They may come once, but not again.
What's wrong with fellows these days?

The bills are high and the funds are low;
Our assets shrink and our "subs" don't grow.
Our guests won't stay—and our clock won't go!
It's time we wound up something!

We sit and dream of days gone by
When our hearts were light and hopes were high,
And we'll go on dreaming until we die—
Life gets stagnant, don't it?

BILL BRADFORD.

Holiday by the Sea

TWELVE RESIDENTS of an establishment for aged persons have just returned from a week's holiday by the sea, no ordinary holiday this but one in which Toc H Skegness played a part.

Like many things of this nature it grew from an idea. In early January, I wrote at great length to Norman MacPherson who promptly passed the idea plus my lengthy correspondence to Skegness Branch. They lost no time in finding suitable accommodation in Boarding Houses and in organising varying activities for the visitors.

The party consisted of seven men and five women whose aggregate ages totalled 858 years. It was only because a couple of "youngsters" under sixty-five were included that kept the aggregate under four figures. The oldest, incidentally, was a sprightly lady of ninety-two. What happened at Skegness is best described in Peter's letter. He wrote:—

I should like to thank you on behalf of the Branch and myself for giving us the chance to be of service and for a very enjoyable week.

Here are some details of the week's activities. We met them in on Saturday and escorted them to their accommodation, incidentally we only used two taxis for the ladies, it hardly seemed worth the trouble of getting in and out for such a short distance. After they had their mid-day meal we left them to settle in for a chat. After tea some of us took the men out for a drink, I hope that does not meet with your disapproval because it was a jolly night. The ladies were content to sit by the open fire and read and talk as ladies will. We were back at nine like good boys, had supper and so to bed, by this time we all knew one another and a grand spirit prevailed.

On Sunday after breakfast two of the ladies expressed a desire to go to church so we took them along and everyone else had a stroll before lunch. After we had partaken of a fine meal, several of our members rolled up and we split into parties and went for walks, we all seemed to meet on the beach though. My friend and I borrowed a bath chair so that we could show the lady with the sticks the town and Miss Walker and another lady came with us. As we were going along the prom we came to the donkeys and my friend took Miss Walker over so that she could touch one, now all this sounds very

simple but I was amazed at the joy that simple action caused and she talked about it for ages. After tea most of the men vanished, I can't imagine where, and the ladies were very content to rest and talk.

Monday was a similar sort of day combined with a little shopping and as most of our members were working, they were more on their own although they had a few visitors each day.

For the rest of the week I am afraid I can only tell you of the evening activities. Tuesday we went to the theatre to *The Chiltern Hundreds*. I was a little dubious as to whether a show of this type was suitable for old people, but they all seemed to enjoy it. Wednesday night we entertained at the Toc H room, a six-hand Whist Drive which everyone played, in fact showed us how! followed by a little concert and sing-song of old-time songs.

Thursday night we went on a bus tour round the Tennyson country, it was a lovely evening. Friday night again the men vanished and the ladies preferred to rest and talk. Saturday, after a very pleasant week, we reluctantly said goodbye to our friends at the station.

This scheme was an experiment as it was felt day trips to the sea, especially to us who are well inland, can be most tiring for the youngsters and more so for the aged (I hate that word).

A week afforded time for these old folk to recover from their journey. Needless to say, the British Railways trip from Peterborough to Skegness is typical of any Midland journey to the sea, a stop at each station plus the extras.

I know that I shall start an argument when I express my view that so much is organised for the younger generation in the way of clubs, cadet corps, scouts, etc. (in no way do I belittle those who benefit), but is Toc H doing enough for those at the other end of life?

My remarks I issue as a challenge to those who lack a job—too oft the cry in some units. Miss Walker, referred to in Peter's letter, is blind and yet the touch of a seaside donkey, probably her first, so simple an action yet "she talked of it for ages", is typical of the appreciation shown by these grateful old people. We are all apt to take so many things for granted and yet so many long to enjoy those self-same things.

Yes, the door is wide open for Toc H really to brighten the lives of the old people and I hope you who have read my effort will join with me when I say—Well done Skegness! W.L.J.

From the Notice Board

EVERY READER of *Tales of Talbot House* knows something of the surviving notices from Tubby's hand which he reprinted in Appendix II: 'Some Relics of the old Notice-Board.' Every pilgrim to the Old House has spent time deciphering the faded ink or typing of those that now hang in frames on the walls. If he has taken the trouble to check these he will have found that certain originals are missing. Some of these have recently turned up, quite unexpectedly, at home and will soon go out to Poperinghe to complete the collection.

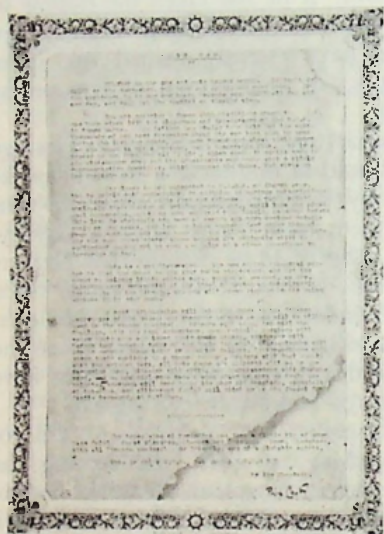
When Padre Frank Peltor took over Spitalgate Vicarage at Grantham in 1946 he found in the house a mass of books and papers left behind by his predecessor, who in turn seems to have inherited them from Padre Herbert Cawley, Vicar of the parish from 1927 to 1936. Before that Herbert Cawley, who had been Padre of Toc H Winnipeg for three years, came in 1926 to London to work at All Hallows. Tubby clearly had these originals in his hand when he published *Tales* in 1919 and at a later stage they must have got confused with the mass of Padre Cawley's papers.

The restored scraps of paper are five in number. One of them, a little strip dated May 12, 1918, and bearing the rubber stamp of the Assistant Chaplain General, Second Army, and his pencil signature—Ronald Irwin, was obviously never intended for the notice board or hung there. It comes to us now as a far-off echo of the trouble which arose over Tubby's disobedience, amusingly described in *Tales*, in not closing Talbot House as soon as he was ordered to do so at a critical moment in April, 1918. It tells the 'Garrison Chaplain, Poperinghe' laconically that:

1. If 2nd Corps orders TALBOT HOUSE to be closed down as an Institute to which Troops visit, you must comply.
2. There is no intention of withdrawing you from your present work.

The others are: (i) The notice to which in *Tales* (p. 94 of the current edition) the heading 'OUR ANIMAL KINGDOM', and

the date 'August, 1917' have been added. In a very neat specimen of Tubby's handwriting it describes amusingly the kitten, the love-birds and the 'jackpie or magdaw' which were the House's pets at the time. (ii) The notice 'STOP PRESS' (*Tales* p. 98) about "a reinforcement of woollies" from Bristol. This is written on the back of the printed list of Christmas services in Talbot House chapel in 1917. (iii) The notice 'EXCHANGE AND MART' (*Tales* p. 94) concerning Tubby's collars, in his handwriting. (iv) A long typed notice, filling a foolscap sheet, which is headed 'VERB-SAP.' and resembles, with striking differences, the one printed in *Tales* (p. 93) under the heading 'UNWELCOME VISITORS'.



The recovered 'VERB SAP', full text of which is printed below.

This new version, stained, dog-eared and pierced, like the first three, by drawing pins, was obviously hung on the notice-board. Internal evidence dates it in 1917, perhaps when the ghastly losses of the Passchendaele fighting were in full swing. This

might well account for the unusual touch of bitterness in the sharp reproof to a new generation of troops. That is old history now, and it seems worth while to print the text of this forgotten document in full for the first time :

Varb. Sap.

WELCOME to the one and only TALBOT HOUSE. We don't put SALVE on the door-step, but they put up SALVAGE next door. Yet the sentiment is in our own heart towards you : SALVE all day and any day, and VALE (at the double) at closing time.

You are entering a House with traditions about it. T.H. has been since 1915 the play-room and day-nursery of the B.E.F. in these parts. The Salient has really been held for its sake. Thousands of men have forgotten about the war here week by week during the last two years, and have remembered about their Homes. For the House is not a Canteen, but a democratic Club. It is a legacy to you from the old VI Div., which spent fifteen months here in the pleistocene era; and the Trusteeship now rests with a widely representative Committee, which manages the House, but gives up the Chaplain as a bad job.

The House is not supported by Y.M.C.A. or Church Army, but is mainly self-supporting, in addition to various subscriptions from local units, and gifts from old friends. We can't afford wholesale distribution of writing paper, etc., still less the piecemeal scrounging, which we have suffered from lately, as never before. This last is obviously the work of gentry who have arrived reluctantly on the scene, too late to learn honesty (and other things) from the real men who have been getting killed for their sakes during the past three years; these persons are evidently still in sufficient safety not to know the value of a clean conscience in dangerous duties.

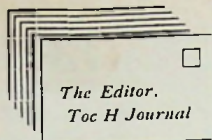
This is a sad digression. The sum of the financial matter is that the House is too poor to be victimised, and not too proud to welcome little gifts: e.g., we are at present, as Mrs. Malaprop says, "enamelled of the idea" of having an *Encyclopædia Britannica* in the Library, and you will march much lighter to the Rhine without it in your pack!

A good Talbotousian will take his share in the diverse activities of the House: and whatever talents he has will be willingly used in the common interest. Singers will sing (so will the Chaplain, with the best intentions, poor fellow), reciters will raise their arms and lower their voices, conjurers will borrow (and return) coins of the Realm (if any), chess-players will try to convert draughtsmen to a nobler calling, letter-writers will drown their spelling in a common ink-pot, readers will deal gently with the printed page, all bets (none are allowed) will go to the Harmonium Fund, Sidesmen will sidle, and Churchwardens will Churchward, no one will come back a week after to pick up their gas helmets; and everyone will drop in on the poor old Chaplain, especially at tea-time, and all (except C.O's) will climb up to the Chapel for family Evensong, at 6.15 p.m.

The House aims at reminding you just a little bit of your "ain folk". Hence pictures, flowers and freedom. Down, therefore, with all "Teuton conduct". Be friendly, and of a Clubable spirit.

This is not a G.R.O., but just a G.R.O.U.S.E.

by the Chaplain, PHILIP CLAYTON.



The Open Hustings

The Editor welcomes letters on all matters concerning Toc H. For reasons of space the right is reserved to shorten letters received, but every effort is made to print a representative selection.

Family Compass

DEAR EDITOR,

In reply to Central Hull, Sevenoaks authorises me to say
(1) A circle has no points
(2) "Four Points of the Compass" has real and deep significance. We are bidden to listen in now and always to the voice of God, which speaks to us at our centre, the heart; then to know His Will revealed in Christ. The North Point of the Compass signifies our head, Christ always thought fairly. East and West signify that our hands are stretched out to love widely and build bravely, how our Master-BUILDER loved to use His hands not only in the Carpenter's Shop, but to heal, restore that which was broken and to bless. South points to the feet which show whether we are on the right path and witnessing that we are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. (Cf also Isaiah 52, 7). Our four ideals are very similar to those of Alfred the Great, namely "Friendship, one good deed a day, worthwhile purpose and wisdom". But above all,

they symbolise the Cross and unselfish sacrifice.

W. T. MONEY,
Sevenoaks. Branch Padre.

Should the Bible end?

DEAR EDITOR,

Most of us know the pardonable glow of satisfaction experienced when a conviction held for many years is reinforced by someone whose opinion one respects. Hence my interest in the article "Why Should the Bible End" in the May JOURNAL. I hope it interested many units of Toc H and that as opportunity offers it will be read and discussed at many Branch Family Nights. My unit has already devoted a night to the article and overcoming the Englishman's reticence to speak of holy things every member present voiced his views on Tubby's challenging suggestion. Naturally opinions differed but all were agreed that our thanks were due to Tubby for affording us the opportunity to think together about the Bible and to you, Mr. Editor, for bringing his proposal to our notice.

BILL CAIN.
Ruislip.

DEAR EDITOR,

Tubby's praise-worthy project in this month's JOURNAL, commends itself to me profoundly (and I would like to be one of, I hope, many to commend it to others) as a most worthwhile enterprise of Christian evangelism and enrichment of Christian literature. The wealth of the spiritual "material" is practically inexhaustible.

Illustrations, of various kinds, would add greatly to the appeal, and of course, the price should be as low as possible.

As one title of the series, which might indicate them as an "annexe", or serial to the Bible, I would like to suggest: "The Acts of the Spirit of Christ (from to)". *Harpenden.* GUY H. GORHAM.

DEAR EDITOR,

There's a great danger in the suggestion that the Bible is a record of human heroism and of human enquiry after God. While admitting that such things are found within its pages, the greatest thing about the Bible is, that it is God's revelation of Himself, and of the way in which He meets our human need for a Saviour from sin. In the process of revealing Himself, God naturally reveals the sinfulness of mankind, and man's vain endeavours to extricate himself from his condition.

One further point I would like to mention. The Bible

carries its own warnings against suggestions such as Tubby has made, and because it is God's Book these warnings cannot be lightly ignored. The warnings are: "If any man shall add unto these things (the words of this book), God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book". (*Rev.*: xxii, 18, 19.) Surely this is the Word of God's testimony to its own completeness.

Let us by all means have the book suggested, but not as a part of Holy Scripture.

LESLIE S. ALCOCK.
Brimington Branch.

'Meeting' or 'Gathering'

DEAR EDITOR,

Words are potent to make or mar a Movement.

For its getting together, Toc H has, regrettably, adopted the frigid term 'Meeting'.

A Board, a Committee, a Council, a pride of Creditors and a Knitting of Mothers hold 'Meetings', which are staid, dull and respectable. But a Clan and a Family have 'Gatherings', usually joyous, sometimes hoisterous, always informal. Only rarely is a 'Gathering' a 'Boil'.

A notice of a 'Meeting' may well repel the stranger; a notice of a 'Gathering' is sure to attract.

Toc H is a Family. Its assembling therefore should surely be a 'Gathering' not a 'Meeting'. What about it?

Yours anxiously,

H. A. SAMs.

Expansion

DEAR EDITOR,

Ideas of what constitutes a healthy unit obviously vary in the Movement; if a Branch is indeed healthy, *expansion* is bound to occur (as lemonade bursts out when the bottle is shaken) unless the members take too literally the words: 'To Witness Humbly', interpreting this as 'To Witness only before fellow Members'.

Embark on a bolder policy, and chance rebuffs and disappointments. As most chaps won't come near the Meeting, arrange to call and compel the poor nervous prospect to accompany you into the lion's den, and see he doesn't escape *en route*!

Furthermore, we must venture now or stagnate, so don't be afraid to talk Toc H, and another point, why not advertise the Meeting, etc., prior to, instead of after, the event?

The widespread ignorance and misunderstanding relating to Toc H, and the failure within to grapple with reality, ought to cause every Member to gird himself for battle—but don't frighten the 'prospect'!

Only the other day a new Member confessed he would never have come if he had not been collected; he is pulling his weight, living Toc H—but he might still be outside.

RON GREEN.

Presteigne Branch.

Gonza's Passing

MY DEAR TURBY,

A mere note to acknowledge yours, addressed to Putt and me and referring to Gonza's death. Thank you for it. It arrived just in time for me to slip an extract in the tribute I had prepared for *The Link*.

Gonza's death was quite sudden and unexpected but very peaceful. She had an English girl—a niece by marriage—staying with her for a couple of days while the latter's boat was in Melbourne. They went to bed after a quiet evening together and when the guest awakened in the morning she noticed that Gonza was not in bed. The 'phone rang and as there was no sound of Gonza going to answer it, the girl got up to do so and found Gonza dead in a chair in the lounge.

So ended a life of very great service and devotion.

Our love to you,

SIR ELLIOTT.

Victoria, Australia.

MY DEAR OLD SIE,

I think your sacred note on Gonza's Passing is just like the finding of the death of Livingstone. Trace it, and then compare it with *your* precious report, reverently transmitted by me to Toc H, H.Q.

Thank you and blessings.

Always,

TURBY.